

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF HARLEM'S BELOVED JAMES E. BOOKER, SR. FONDLY KNOWN AS THE DEAN OF BLACK JOURNALISTS & FORMER SPECIAL ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise with great pride, admiration and sadness as I pay tribute to my dear friend and life-long buddy, Brother James E. Booker, Sr., as we celebrate the passing of one of Harlem's greatest National Correspondents and Political/Community News Columnists at Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Harlem.

As I speak with profound honor and respect for my friend Jimmy, I ascend to celebrate a life well-lived and to also remember the many journalistic professional accomplishments of this remarkable man. Always dressed in his signature bowtie look, Jimmy Booker penned his name in history. He was the classic newspaperman, a writer with a remarkable flare for accuracy, integrity and style. Jimmy's columns, "The Uptown Lowdown" and "Top Drawer Stuff," were informative, edgy and insightful capturing unfolding stories about Harlem, Black New York. City Hall, Albany and our Nation's Capital.

James E. Booker, Sr., was born in Riverhead, New York to Fletcher and Elizabeth Booker on July 16th, 1926. He was reared, attended school, and worked on his father's farm in Riverhead, New York. In 1948, Booker graduated from Howard University in Washington, DC, with a Bachelor's in Arts in Journalism, and then moved to New York City to begin a career in Journalism working as a reporter for the Amsterdam News in Harlem. In 1950, he served in the United States Army during the Korean War. He later returned to his job as a Journalist with the New York Amsterdam News.

Jimmy referred to his 16 years at the Amsterdam News, where he eventually became Executive Editor, the most exciting of his journalistic career. He traveled the country, interfacing with such notables as the Rev., Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Harlem Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, National Urban League Director, and Whitney M. Young, all of whom he developed a first name relationship with.

On December 22nd, 1956, he married the former Jeanne Carol Williams, in New York, and moved to the newly erected Lenox Terrace, where he lived for the remainder of his life. In 1964, the couple had a son, James E. Booker Jr. (Reverend James E. Booker, Jr.). In 1966, Jimmy took his family to Washington, DC, to work as Special Advisor to President Lyndon Baines Johnson. In 1968, Jimmy returned home to Harlem, and opened up his own public relations business, "James E. Booker Associates" on 527 Madison Avenue in New York City.

Jimmy leaves behind a great written legacy of stories, history, adventure, and legendary achievements that will continue to uplift all of our African American families to the highest levels of advancements. Jimmy story includes some of the most important historic episodes of the 20th century. When Fidel Castro arrived

in Harlem in 1960, Jimmy Booker was there, interviewing the young Cuban for one hour at the famed Theresa Hotel. Figures like Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and National Urban League founder, Whitney M. Young.

Even the notorious Bumpy Johnson who ruled the streets of Harlem did not escape the pen. Jimmy knew first hand how dangerous a man he was. "He put a gun to my head and told me he didn't like what I had been writing," Booker once told a group of friends one night at the Theresa Hotel where he frequented, amusing listeners with many incredible tales.

He covered us many times, Percy Sutton, Basil Paterson and David Dinkins, the infamous Gang of Four with those same remarkable attributes that made us so revered in his famous national and local weekly columns. He served the cause of justice by covering the biggest stories of the Civil Rights Movement, giving the world insight on groups like the NAACP and the Black Panthers Party.

For years his column in the Amsterdam News was chocked full of tidbits and gossip about Harlem, the kind of "who shot John" stuff that never failed to keep readers' attention. Later, during his tenure at the New York Beacon, he maintained his tireless contact with every facet of the community's activities, roving from board meetings, to funerals, to rallies, to wherever the action was. Booker's Columns were published weekly in many independent and syndicated news and community publications including: "The Afro Times," "The Daily Challenge," "Big Red," and "The Twilight."

Jimmy was also a very close advisor to many politicians, activist and community organizations, past and present, including Lloyd E. Dickens, "The Fox" J. Raymond Jones, Fred E. Samuels, Professor Preston Wilcox, Dr. John Henrik Clarke, Edward Fordham, Inez E. Dickens, Keith L.T. Wright, C. Virginia Fields, Hazel N. Dukes, Dr. Annie B. Martin and the NAACP to name just a few.

Jimmy was also fond of Harlem's Nightlife where he covered many luminaries, entertainers and personalities like Count Basie, Billy Eckstine, Sammy Davis, Jr., Charles Honi Coles, Leroy Myers, Gregory Hines, Pop Brown, George Benson, Nat Davis, Irene Reid, Jimmy "Preacher" Robins, Gloria Lynne, Savion Glover and the Prince of Harlem, Lonnie Youngblood, at the Theresa Hotel and later at Harlem's famous Showman's Jazz Café. Mr. Booker held court on a regular basis with his longtime friends Al Howard, Mona Lopez, Diamond Lil Pierce, Tanya Alfonso, Ida Fernandez, and members of "The Showman's Elites" and "The Disciples."

He will long be remembered for his extraordinary commitment, humor, liveliness, energy, wisdom, discipline, principle and clear purpose which won the admiration of all who were privileged to come to know and work with him during his distinguished career. Jimmy E. Booker, Sr. was called home on Friday morning, February 5th, and his home going services took place on February 9th, at Harlem's historic Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was a major stop on the Underground Railroad.

Madam Speaker, I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to observe and experience his example as a personal inspiration. Though Jimmy is no longer with us, we will continue to keep his memory alive in our

hearts and minds, and continue to honor his legacy with our advocacy for the issues he cared about the most. We are all blessed to have known, Jimmy E. Booker, Jr., a titan of a man who witnessed history with a pen that gave us all life.

HONORING HUGH GOODWIN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Hugh Goodwin upon being honored with the "Trail Blazers Award" by the African American Museum. Mr. Goodwin will be honored at the African American History Month Celebration and Banquet on Saturday, February 6th, 2010 in Fresno, California.

Mr. Hugh Wesley Goodwin, Sr. was born on May 6, 1921 to James and Anna Goodwin. He was the youngest of seven children. The family settled in Steelton, Pennsylvania where his father worked both as a steel worker and a Baptist minister. Mr. Goodwin served in the military during World War II. Upon his discharge he graduated from Harvard Law School and moved to California to practice law.

Mr. Goodwin was the first African American lawyer and judge in Fresno County. He opened his law practice in Fresno during the early 1950's. In 1957 Mr. Goodwin married Frances Jones. Together they raised four children; Hugh, Paul, Anna and Tom.

Over the next fifty years, Mr. Goodwin continuously advocated for disadvantaged people and challenged the racial boundaries at the time. Through his perseverance and advocacy, he earned a wide range of respect from his peers, as well as members of the community. Mr. Goodwin was very active in the community. He was a member of the Equal Opportunities Commission Legal Council and volunteered at the Fresno Rescue Mission. Mr. Goodwin served as President of the Fresno Black Caucus and President of the West Fresno Little League. After the little league games, Mr. Goodwin would take the scores and highlights to The Fresno Bee to be published in the paper the next day. He was a devout Christian; he attended Second Baptist Church and served many years as a deacon and a Sunday school teacher.

In 1976, Mr. Goodwin was appointed to the municipal court bench in Fresno County. While serving on the bench, he gained national attention when he sentenced convicted defendants to church rather than serving jail time or paying fines. Throughout the controversy, he remained committed to his beliefs. Mr. Goodwin returned to private practice in 1978 and remained practicing until 1996. Mr. Goodwin passed away in 2004.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Hugh Goodwin. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring his life and wishing the best for his family.